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Minutes of the
Meeting of the
Executive Committee
of the
World Council of Churches

11-14 September 2001

Meeting held at the

Ecumenical Center, Geneva, Switzerland

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In the afternoon of 11 September 2001, reports about the attacks on the World Trade Center in New York City and the Pentagon in Washington D.C. began to reach the Executive Committee.

Dr. Kobia read a message sent by Mr. Phil Jenks of the WCC New York Office to the Executive Committee, and others added the news they had received during the pauses.

A letter of condolence and support was sent to the US member churches. At various times during the meeting, the members of the Executive Committee held special prayers for the victims of the attack and for the churches in the USA.

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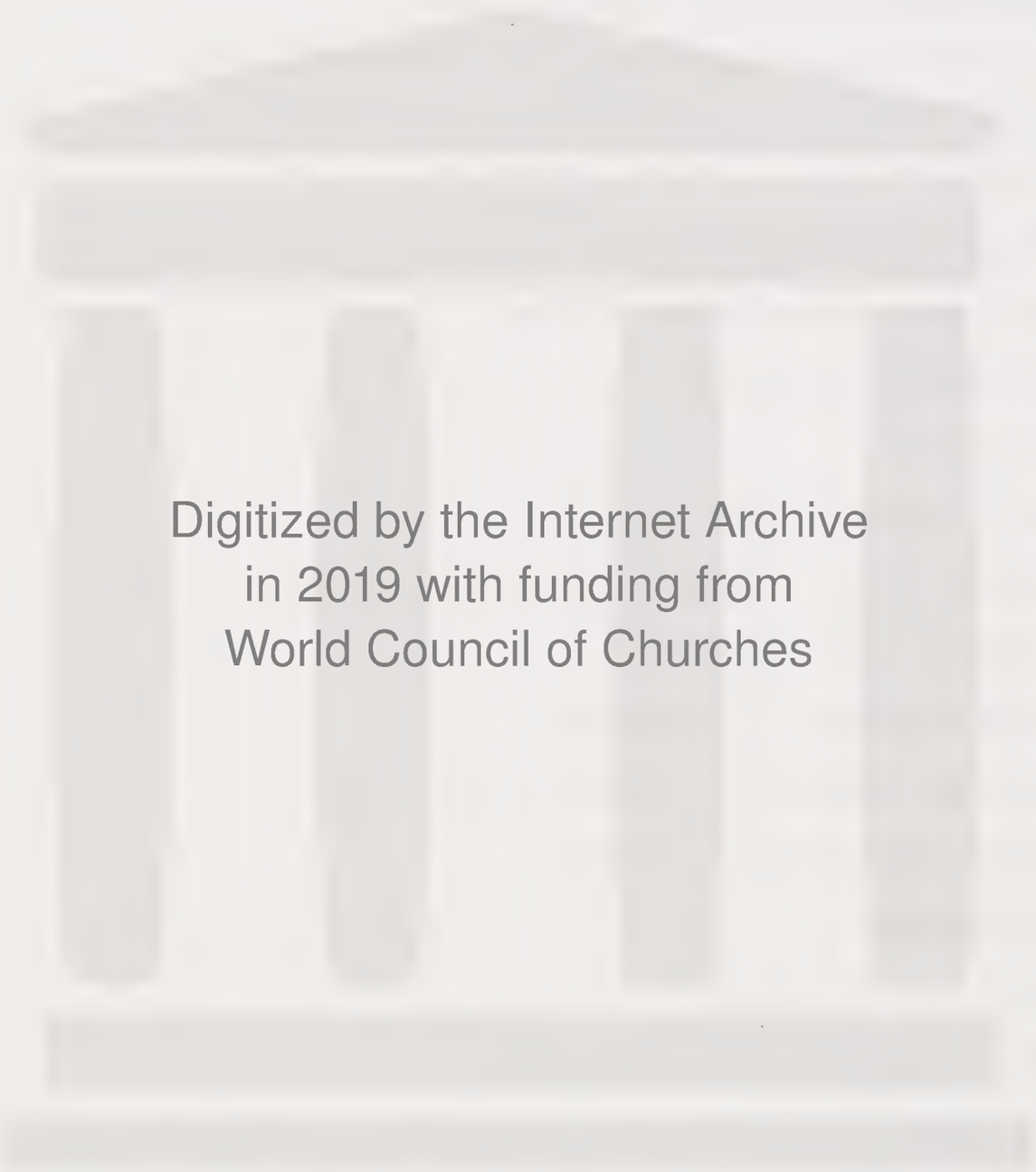

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World Council of Churches

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

held at the World Council of Churches, Geneva

11-14 September 2001

1. OPENING ACTIONS

Worship

Members of the Executive Committee led morning worship each day at the Ecumenical Centre.

Call to Order and Welcome

The Moderator, His Holiness Aram I, called the meeting to order at 9.00 hours on Tuesday, 11 September 2001. He welcomed all the participants and on behalf of the Executive Committee specially welcomed the representatives of new member churches to the WCC. He then invited the Executive Committee members from different regions to speak informally about the situations in their respective countries.

The General Secretary also welcomed the representatives of new member churches to the WCC and asked them to introduce themselves. They included: Rev. Angba John Kongi, African Inland Church, Sudan, Rev. Dr. Faustin Bashaka, Association des Eglises Baptistes au Rwanda, Dr. Tomas Shivute, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia, Mr Justice Isaac Duose, Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ghana, Rev. Job A. Santiago, Convention of Philippine Baptist Churches, and Rev. Matagi Vilitama, Ekalesia Niue.

Rev. Vilitama, representative of the Church of Niue, conveyed greetings and gratitude from the Church of Niue for accepting this small church into the ecumenical family. He then presented gifts to the WCC, in honor of the reception of his church into WCC membership.

Roll Call

The General Secretary called the roll of members present, noting apologies from the Rev. Dr Hilarion Alfeyev, Ms Donnalie E.C. Edwards-Cabey, Bishop Dr Wolfgang Huber, Ms Carmencita Karagdag, Very Rev. Leonid Kishkovsky and Ms Abigail O. Ogunsanya. The Executive Committee agreed to the substitution of Rev. Fr Mikhail Gundyaev for the Rev. Dr Hilarion Alfeyev, Bishop Dr Rolf Koppe for Bishop Dr Wolfgang Huber and Ms Anne Glynn Mackoul for the Very Rev. Leonid Kishkovsky.

Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the last Executive Committee meeting, held at the Bonhoeffer Haus in Berlin, Germany, 26-27 January 2001, were approved as printed.

Adoption of Agenda and Timetable

The General Secretary introduced the proposed Agenda which was adopted. He mentioned the three sub-committees of the Executive Committee, Programme, Finance, and Staffing and Nominations, as well as the small group on Public Issues. He noted that Ms Mackoul would join the Programme sub-committee, Ms Lakawa the small group on Public Issues and Fr Mikhail the sub-committee on Staffing and Nominations. Bishop Koppe would shift between the Programme and Finance sub-committees if needed.

2. REPORT OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY

General Overview

The General Secretary gave a broad overview of the work of the Council since the last meetings of the Central and Executive Committees. He referred to the critical financial situation of the Council and the steps being taken to come to terms with this reality. He welcomed two new colleagues who had officially joined WCC since the last Central Committee meeting, Mr Michiel Hardon, Director of IMD and Ms Elaine Dykes, Finance Manager. He also acknowledged that Ms Jane Richardson had joined the US office to work on fund raising. Dr Raiser told the group that the cooperation of the team coordinators and the finance controllers had made it possible to bring the budget for 2001 in line with the directives of the Central Committee. Although this had been difficult and challenging, it had also been a positive experience. He said that the WCC is now working on the development of a new income development strategy and an activity based accounting system.

He reminded the Executive Committee of the study process of developing the Information Technology (IT) environment to correspond to the needs of a knowledge-based organisation. This had led to the establishment of a new "Project Team" whose work will extend the use and application of IT far beyond the area of financial administration. He mentioned the new Intranet site that would be inaugurated that week.

The General Secretary informed the Executive Committee that the evaluation of WCC work in first three years since the assembly would begin soon. Dr Marion Best would be able to help the staff in the evaluation process, along with a core group of the Programme Committee. In September 2002 a consolidated assessment will be presented to the Central Committee as a basis for projecting plans for the period up to the next assembly.

Dr. Raiser referred to the new human resources policy and remuneration system and hoped that this Executive Committee could take the necessary decisions of principle so that the new policy could be put into effect at the beginning of 2002.

Follow-up since last Central Committee Meeting

Decade to Overcome Violence

Dr Raiser told the members that since the Berlin the USA, CLAI had held one in Columbia and launches had been held in both East and West Africa. The launch in West Africa was combined with a meeting of the DOV Reference Group. He also informed the Executive Committee that a launch for the Ecumenical Center would take place on Thursday, 13 September 2001.

Emphasis on Economic Globalization

At the last Central Committee meeting, the Policy Reference Committee II had called for deeper theological analysis, the development of guidelines and a focus on alternatives within the framework of the DOV. The General Secretary reported that there had been several broad public discussions on globalization, not least around the G8 summit in Genoa. Intensive work in this area continues, with two recent consultations having taken place in Eastern Europe and in the Pacific region.

Special Commission

Dr Raiser referred the members to document 3 on the Special Commission. The steering group of the Special Commission had met last March and decided to focus the discussion on decision making and membership. The next plenary meeting is to be held from 15-20 November 2001 in Hungary.

Significant Developments and Events

Norman Shanks, Central Committee member and leader of the Iona Community, had been invited to join the staff for a week at the end of Lent. He led a series of morning devotions and midday prayers. Dr Raiser said that this practice could be continued, inviting members of the Central Committee to lead the staff in a specific journey of common spiritual reflection.

The General Secretary reported that the staff had continued planning the financial environment, with a meeting of the WCC Round Table in April. Representatives of funding partners had attended. The Round Table had become an important instrument for strengthening links to funding partners, both agencies and churches. Following this meeting, further discussions are taking place involving mission agencies. This model might also be applied to development and aid agencies. He also noted that these partners are re-thinking their own ecumenical identity.

Dr Raiser mentioned several important meetings, including the Commission on International Affairs which had focused on global political governance and the use of power in the age of globalization. The subject will form the basis of a global consultation before the next assembly. The Commission on Mission and Evangelism had also met to discuss, i.a. the perspectives leading up to the next World Mission and Evangelism Conference.

The General Secretary highlighted several meetings on peace and reconciliation, including the Conference on Peace and Security in Northern Asia, a meeting in West Africa, a gathering of religious leaders from Macedonia, a preparatory visit by a small ecumenical team to Israel and the Occupied Territories, and the consultation on Israel and Palestine held last August. This last meeting was the high point of continuous preparations for the UN Human Rights Commission in Geneva and follow up to the Minute on Israel and Palestine from the last meeting of the Central Committee. The consultation was moderated by His Holiness Aram I. It considered

effective ways of accompanying the churches in the area and reflected on a coordinated strategy to promote peace.

In conclusion Dr Raiser mentioned the UN World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, for which the WCC had carried out an intensive preparatory process with staff visits to South Africa and several regional meetings. A report from the ecumenical delegation would be heard in the discussion of the report on Programme Highlights.

Visits to Member Churches

Dr Raiser reported on several visits, three of which were to Orthodox churches: the Serbian Orthodox Church, the Armenian Apostolic Church in Lebanon on the occasion of its 1700th anniversary, and the Autocephalous Orthodox Church in Albania. The General Secretary had also visited the churches in Bangladesh, where the Christian community is trying to bridge tensions and overcome rivalries among the churches, which are a minority in a predominantly Muslim context. In Sri Lanka the General Secretary met with the Christian community deeply affected by continuing conflict. It is struggling to promote commitment by the churches to a process of reconciliation.

Dr Raiser also visited several islands in the Pacific, including Samoa, Western Samoa, Tahiti and the Cook Islands. The peoples there are looking for ways to maintain the identities of their communities in the face of large-scale emigration. He also described his recent trip to Southern Africa where he participated in the second Tri-annual Conference of SACC. In Namibia, the team was joined by a delegation of the Angolan Council of Churches for a discussion of the role of the churches in promoting peace in Angola. In Botswana, the main focus was the HIV/AIDS pandemic and in Zimbabwe the churches had just published a pastoral letter to the nation called "the truth will make you free". The letter was considered a provocation by the government. The churches in Zimbabwe will need the support of the ecumenical family as they carry out their ministry.

Dr Raiser concluded the report on his visits by mentioning that he had participated in a festive symposium for Philip Potter's 80th birthday the previous week.

Looking Ahead

The General Secretary told the Executive Committee that the WCC was moving into a period of evaluation, in which various instruments developed by the governing bodies and the staff would be tested. He thanked the Officers for agreeing to a proposal for his study leave during the months of October and November 2001.

Dr Raiser informed the group that he had been reviewing procedures for the election of the new General Secretary and the composition of the search committee. He hoped to receive guidance from the sub-committee on Staffing and Nominations on this matter.

He also asked that the members think about dates and venue for the Ninth Assembly. It would be helpful to bring recommendations to next Central Committee.

Dr Raiser noted that the dates for future Central and Executive Committee meetings would have to be considered during this meeting.

Discussion

In the discussion that followed the General Secretary's presentation, a number of comments were made and questions raised:

- The members of the Committee expressed their appreciation for the report of the General Secretary.

- At the Round Table meetings, it would be advisable to invite key church leaders from countries where the agencies are located, to help

WCC staff members present the case of funding the work of the WCC.

- Agencies and church partners see themselves less and less as bodies in relation with or accountable to churches. For many, accountability is less important than effectiveness, speed and visibility of impact. The Round Table and other means should be used to strengthen WCC's collaboration and partnership with ecumenical partners on all aspects of WCC work.

- The visits of the General Secretary, WCC staff and members of governing bodies are very important to the churches in the regions. It is through visits that the WCC becomes visible to the churches and the reality of the churches is brought home to the WCC.

- Appreciation was expressed for the idea and practice of inviting members of the Executive and Central Committee and others involved in the ecumenical movement to come to Geneva on occasion to experience a broader understanding of the WCC and its witness.

- In response to a question, the Committee was informed that the Project Team continues to work on the Ecumenical Information Sharing Platform (EISP), with a view to make it eventually available to the churches and other members of the ecumenical family for information sharing and feedback.

- In response to a question concerning the work of the churches of Zimbabwe on the matter of land ownership, the General Secretary reported that the churches had not been able to make any inroads on government policy. They will need the support of the churches in pursuing this discussion.

3. PRELIMINARY FINANCE REPORT

Bishop McKinley Young introduced this item and asked the staff to present the report. Mr Robert Christeler thanked Bishop Young for standing in for Bishop Huber on the Finance sub-committee. Mr. Christeler then presented the report to the Executive Committee, highlighting the financial results in the first seven months of 2001 and the summary financial projections for the period 2002 – 2004.

Financial Performance for Seven Months to 31 July 2001

Mr Christeler explained that for the first seven months of the year the WCC had already reached the expected deficit for the entire year, due mostly to important losses incurred on the Council's investment portfolio. Nevertheless, the total contributions figure was slightly more than expected for the seven-month period. At the same time, the WCC had spent slightly less than the targeted amount for the seven months and staff costs in particular were lower than forecast for this point in the year. He also took the opportunity to report that these costs are down despite the fact that the WCC has given staff a cost-of-living increase as well as increasing the contribution to the provident fund. He commended the staff for their efforts in containing costs.

Ms Elaine Dykes, the Manager of the Finance Department, commented on the investments. She said that the CHF 1.694 million deficit at the end of July is chiefly the result of losses in the financial market. She explained that unrealized losses result from changes in the value of the portfolio rather than purchases or sales of securities. She also informed the Executive Committee that, as requested by the Finance Committee, the structure of the portfolio had been changed to include a different mix of bonds and stocks, as well as a higher portion of Swiss Franc denominated securities, thus reducing the risk profile of the investments. She reported that while the general reserve remained unchanged since December 31, 2000 at CHF 4.78 million, the endowment fund investment and interest reserves had been reduced from

CHF 817, 000 to CHF 120,000 at July 31 2001. With only this minimal investment reserve remaining, it was noted that an estimated CHF 800,000 in unrealized losses was expected to be recorded for August 2001. She informed the Committee that the WCC's advisers nevertheless have reported that over the long run returns on investments should reach 5 to 5.5% .

2002 Budget

Mr Christeler then told the group that as of 2002 the WCC budget would be presented in a consolidated manner with activity-based costing and a three - year rolling set of financial objectives. This would be tightly linked to the programme activity planning process. Further details would be provided in the Finance sub-committee of the Executive.

Income Monitoring and Development

Mr. Michiel Hardon, Director of IMD, made a presentation to the Committee on income development for the period 1996-2000 and outlined IMD strategy to enable the Council to work on the four main programmatic foci determined by the Harare Assembly.

Income figures show a 40% decrease, from CHF 82.4 million in 1996 to CHF 51.3 million in 2000. IMD strategy will focus on maintaining and increasing the contributions from the churches and on developing new sources of funding. Mr Hardon proposed various measures to realize these aims. These would be discussed in the Finance sub-committee.

The Executive Committee expressed its appreciation for the lively presentation and its support of IMD in face of the challenge of creating a new fund-raising policy.

In the **discussion**, the following comments were made:

- The Committee thanked the staff for their presentations and commended them for the effective control of expenditure.

- The deficit on activity budgets is explained by the deliberate "building down" of fund balances, as requested by the agencies. The agencies are reluctant to fund those activities which dispose of fund balances.

- More undesignated funding would enable the WCC to budget in a more flexible way. This is one of the reasons for the new membership campaign. The WCC is pursuing discussion with the agencies on this point.

The Finance Report was referred to the Finance sub-committee for discussion.

4. HUMAN RESOURCES POLICY

In the absence of Ms Christina Minezac who was on sick leave, Mr Georges Lemopoulos presented the report on the Human Resources Policy. He expressed his gratitude to colleagues of the in-house design team and to the leadership for their trust and confidence in this group. The document before the Committee was the result of a long and complex process.

Grading System

The proposal would simplify the classification of staff into five major roles, bringing the system in line with the new team-based internal structure of the WCC and reflecting the spirit of the CUV. Staff would be classified under the headings of programme staff, to be appointed by the Executive Committee, and administrative, specialized staff and house support staff, to

be appointed by the General Secretary. The proposal would imply minor changes in the Rules and Regulations of the Council.

New Salary Scale

In keeping with the philosophy of the Council, the proposed salary scale would maintain the principle of assuring that there was only a small gap between the lowest and highest salaries; proportionally, the greatest salary increases would be attributed to the lower grades. It would affirm the present level of salaries for all staff and provide for corrective increases where needed. The General Secretary would consider requests for staff wishing to benefit from a retirement package, and colleagues who wished to work beyond retirement age would be asked to do so at salaries which would provide savings to the WCC.

Further Areas of Work

Mr. Lemopoulos explained that work would still need to be done in two areas of the Human Resources Policy: These include work on new Staff Rules and Regulations concerning evaluation of staff performance, new styles of working, and new ways of deploying human resources. He referred to the potential use of consultants working within their own churches or institutions as well as to interns who could make significant contributions to the Council at the same time as they learn about the ecumenical movement.

Discussion

It was noted that the proposal could provide a model for church organizations which have to observe the salary norms of the market and at the same time apply ethical considerations in drawing up salary scales and remuneration systems.

In explaining the distinction between programme and specialized staff, Mr

Lemopoulos said that specialized staff would include those who enable the functioning of the programmes, such as the project team, but are not directly responsible for them. Programme staff would be those who implement the programmes, usually in direct contact with representatives of member churches. He further explained that there would be no increase in overall staff costs due to these changes. In the long term there would be savings, since the former annual step increases would likely be replaced by a seniority increase every three years if warranted by a performance appraisal.

The General Secretary noted that in the new internal structure, accountability would be shared among each staff member, the teams and the Staff Leadership Group, which had principal managerial responsibility for the organization. This system would avoid fragmentation and promote a team-based approach to the work, recognizing the strengths and gifts of each team member in the implementation of a common task determined in close cooperation with the constituency. The new team-based working style implied a cultural change for long-serving staff members, but was easily accepted by new colleagues. He hoped that it would increase the confidence of the churches in the work of the Council.

Discussion and Report of the Sub-Committee on Staffing and Nominations

The Deputy General Secretary presented the developments of the Human Resource Policy in its efforts to stabilize total salary costs. Policy development focuses on three measures. Firstly, any vacancy is dealt with very carefully; secondly, the distribution of tasks is being analyzed at a strategic level, and lastly, and where it is appropriate, and at their request, colleagues are being offered early retirement packages under certain conditions. The only items left to increase the budget line are the cost of living and the wage increases linked to new qualifications.

It has been noted that the new salary scale is being developed with

attention to policies from the International Organizations, the local commercial market in Geneva, churches and international general trends. The Human Resource Team has been working on the human resource policy for over two years now and is confident that the policy is positioned to allow the Council to maintain control of its salary costs.

The General Secretary informed the Committee about other measures being taken to contain the salary mass. He shared with the Committee two documents: 1) Principles applicable to staff who would like to consider the possibility of early retirement in 2002 and 2) Principles applicable to staff who would like to continue to work beyond retirement age. He also mentioned the invitation to staff to consider the possibility of reducing their working time.

The overall goal of the Human Resource Policy can be seen from three different points of view: historically the WCC has been restructuring every 10 years; the financial views spread over 3 years; but most important of all, the Human Resource Policy will depend on how the WCC is developing. This is the strategic point of focus to which all are attentive.

Recommendation

The Sub-committee ***recommended*** *and the Executive Committee at a later session took the following actions:*

New Human Resources Policy Paper and Salary System

The Executive Committee **endorsed** the move to the concept of the "**five general staff roles**" and **recommended** that the appropriate steps be taken to change WCC Rule IX (cf. Constitution and Rules of the WCC) and, consequently, all related Staff Rules.

Concerning the **appointment policy**, the Executive Committee commended the appropriate steps towards aligning Staff Rules II 1.01 to

Rule IX.3.A; and **recommended** that the Central Committee delegate to the General Secretary the authority to appoint specialized, administrative and house support staff.

The Executive Committee **received** the information about the **revision of Staff Rules and Regulations**, and **recommended** that this revision be finalized by the end of February 2002.

The Committee **received** the document on the new **salary scale**.

5. PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS AND THE REPORT OF THE PROGRAMME SUB-COMMITTEE

Introduction

Rev. Dr Sam Kobia introduced the staff activity report, which was not intended to review all of the work of the Council since the last Central Committee meeting, but to highlight some aspects that are either at an early stage and should be shared, or to seek advice and guidance on specific programmes. The report is a joint effort by the directors of the clusters on Relations, Issues and Themes and Communication to show the integration of the work of the Council. The Committee would also hear from other colleagues on specific matters.

This would be the first time that Communication reports together with the clusters on Relations and Issues and Themes. The Communication cluster is not only a technical service cluster, but one involved in all stages of planning and implementation.

The Programme sub-committee appreciated the style and presentation of the Programme Report, which was a clear illustration of the effectiveness of the new integrated approach to the Council's work.

UN World Conference Against Racism (UNWCAR)

Rev. Kobia asked Ms Marilia Schüller, executive secretary in the JPC team, to report on the UN Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, which took place in Durban, South Africa from 26 August to 7 September 2001. She had primary responsibility for coordinating the processes leading up to the involvement of the ecumenical team in Durban.

Ms Schüller reported on the intensive preparatory process which preceded the conference in Durban. It had involved coordination of participants from the wider ecumenical family. The WCC delegation numbered thirty-five persons, including representatives of the Sinti and Roma peoples, Palestinians, Dalits, women, youth, Africans and people of African descent, indigenous peoples and other minority groups engaged in advocating for the rights of these people. The delegation was led by Bishop Dandala of South Africa.

Ms Schüller referred to the controversial role of the media in reporting on the conference. The NGO draft declaration, for example, was not reported. Although very controversial, it had provided a space for many groups to present their plight. Media focus had centered almost exclusively on the positions of Israel and the US, to the detriment of the Palestinians and the rest of the world. Nevertheless, the NGO participants had developed a climate of solidarity in Durban. The conference also represented an important moment for the churches in South Africa, the South African Council of Churches and its Council on Diakonia. It had helped to rekindle the relationship of the WCC with the churches in South Africa.

The inclusion in the governmental declaration of the text on slavery and the slave trade as a crime against humanity represented an important victory, opening a space for governments to address the mistakes of the past.
Archbishop Desmond Tutu's presence at the press conference organized by the ecumenical caucus put the churches on the first page of many

newspapers. Ms Schüller thanked Communication colleagues for preparing a strategy for reporting on the conference.

Ms Kristine Greenaway commented on the event, an example of how programmatic and communication colleagues work together. The response of WCC communication to monolithic communication media presenting only one point of view is to make as strong a statement as possible, and in the long term, challenge the media and help to sensitize individual journalists to all aspects of the story. WCC communication strategy takes seriously the use of alternative media (web sites, newsletters, WCC photos, videos, small publishing houses) to work with media and communication officers in the churches.

Discussion

Bishop Young commented that the specific "talking points" which had been prepared for the WCC staff and delegation to the UN Conference on Racism would be useful for Executive Committee members as they report back to their churches.

His Holiness Aram I reminded the Committee that the WCC has a long history of commitment to combat racism. The WCC delegation clearly communicated our views, concerns and commitments in a responsible and courageous manner.

The role of the churches is to reflect on the issue from an ethical and moral perspective and to show how it is related to other phenomena which lead to oppression. The WCC and the churches should give special attention to the role of the media in such situations.

The danger of competition to be heard is present in such conferences. It is important for people to understand that they are being recognized and listened to. In this conference there were moments when people could get together and support each other. This was the only way that the NGO conference voices could be heard.

WCC follow up will include dissemination of the ecumenical caucus statement which was issued during the days of the governmental conference. It is a call to churches around the world to work together to eradicate racism. The WCC will continue its advocacy work on Dalit rights and will present a study paper on racism to the Central Committee in September 2002.

The Executive Committee expressed its deep appreciation of the report on the UN Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance.

Recommendation

At a later session, the Programme sub-committee ***recommended****, and the Executive Committee* ***agreed****, that the WCC should issue a call to all member churches to seize the time for a continuous and unequivocal commitment for justice for Indigenous Peoples, Dalits, African and African-descendents, Roma and Sinti People, Migrants, Asylum Seekers and Refugees based on the vision of a world without racism.*

Inter-religious Challenges

Ms Geneviève Jacques introduced the topic, which is a follow up to an earlier Executive Committee discussion in which the Council was asked to strengthen its work on inter-religious dialogue. Since then, the WCC has been involved in promoting inter-religious cooperation and dialogue in conflict situations in Macedonia, Sierra Leone, and Indonesia. As part of this emphasis, the WCC is revising the booklet on "Guidelines for Dialogue" to provide resources for the churches and ecumenical partners involved in multi-faith concerns. In addition, the Council is promoting a multi-faith approach to global issues, in which colleagues from various

WCC teams work together. They have begun to prepare for a consultation in December 2001.

Dr Tarek Mitri, executive secretary in the team on Inter-Religious Relations, reported on the work of the team in the interim period. He noted the tendency in the media and elsewhere to overstate the role of religion in conflicts. He remarked on the growing demand from governments and the business community for religious leaders and institutions to provide spiritual discourse on current global problems. WCC has to reflect on how it might respond to such demands.

Dr Mitri indicated that the team was working to equip churches to deal with conflict situations. This entails collaboration with other WCC teams working on global issues and the more patient task of dialogue and building relationships to establish a capital of trust. Only then can the WCC make a difference in urgent situations.

The team on Inter-Religious Relations is revisiting the booklet "Guidelines for Dialogue" in the light of two decades of work and recent calls for cooperation from representatives of other faiths.

The team is planning an inter-religious consultation involving representatives of WCC constituencies and others engaged in multi-faith initiatives, such as the World Conference on Religion and Peace, Sant' Egidio, the World Bank, Rissho Kosei-Kai and the UN. The church representatives would then meet to draw up a document which would help WCC identify the parameters of its own involvement. The WCC would still need to find ways to finance this plan.

Discussion

H.H. Aram I welcomed the concrete steps being taken following the discussions of the Executive Committee last year. The churches living in a multi-faith context need guidance on how to deal with the existential questions they face in their daily lives. WCC work on multi-faith questions must be grounded in solid intellectual and theological reflection and dialogue so that there is no ambiguity for the churches.

The General Secretary expressed satisfaction with the plans of the IRR team, noting that the WCC urgently needs the advice of the Executive Committee on this question, one of the most difficult and potentially most conflictive areas for providing ecumenical leadership. The WCC must define its own agenda rather than adopting the agenda of others.

Recommendation

Following discussion in the Programme sub-committee, the Executive Committee ***affirmed*** *the importance of the work in this area and urged that the revised version of the booklet Guidelines for Dialogue be made available soon and distributed as widely as possible. Meanwhile the booklet Striving Together in Dialogue on Christian/Muslim dialogue should be shared widely, in particular with the USA churches.*

Decade to Overcome Violence (DOV)

Rev. Kobia introduced the topic, mentioning several other launches which had followed the global launch in Berlin. He noted that churches focus on their own particular contexts in working on the DOV. The staff had identified four thematic foci for its own work; these had been affirmed by the DOV reference group. They include reflection on the anthropological pre-suppositions which legitimize violence, the use and abuse of power, justice and the role of law, and religious identity and plurality. The WCC plans to produce a booklet for use by the churches in which it further

develops the four foci, and to organize a mid-decade event, which could be an inter-religious one. It will also explore possibilities for building up an international network "Partners for Peace", based on existing partnerships.

Ms Greenaway noted that the core DOV team includes a DOV communicator who contributes to raising the visibility of the programme, along with colleagues in the Communication cluster. This includes producing newsletter and feature stories on the worldwide web and e-mail. Additional materials are being developed and the WCC is encouraging churches to develop their own communication methods and tools appropriate to the context.

Discussion

Rev. Daba had participated in the launch for Eastern Africa which took place in Uganda. He felt that the address of the Moderator to the Central Committee in Potsdam had been helpful and should be made public for use at such events. The materials produced by the WCC and the churches should be made available to the churches worldwide.

The churches, national councils and local communities in different parts of the world are beginning to assume ownership of the DOV. They should be encouraged to make visible their efforts. The WCC Newsletter is one of the instruments churches are using in their work on the DOV.

Appreciation was expressed for the plan to produce a user-friendly booklet on the four foci for use in local congregations. It would bring some valuable content to the wider readership.

Globalization

Dr Kobia presented the report on economic globalization. There is a clear paradigm shift today from the use of political force to organize and order

society, to economic or market forces. This has created losers and winners while destroying the earth and the integration of societies.

The work of the WCC on globalization over the past months has focused on the impact of the enhanced power of corporations and powerful rich countries on the majority of the people in the world as well as on new value-setting in modern society. This shift impacts the lives of people from all sectors, including the church. In stark contrast to the language used over the last 150 years, the market paradigm has introduced an entrepreneurial approach to evangelistic work in many circles.

The Central Committee's policy paper, "Economic Globalization: A Critical View and an Alternative Vision", provides the basis for planning activities up to the next assembly. The document "Lead us Not Into Temptation...", produced by a team of theologians, sociologists, environmentalists, economists and financial experts called together by the WCC, is intended for use as background material for churches engaged in encounters with the World Bank and the IMF.

Other aspects of the work on economic globalization include the creation of an Ecumenical Team for Alternative Discourse to Globalization (ETAD). It has prepared a framework for ecumenical encounters on economic globalization to enable the Council to raise theological, ethical and economic concerns in this context.

Recommendation

*The Programme sub-committee **affirmed** the work completed and planned, and welcomed a proposal for the study on land and water as sources of conflict.*

Power and Politics in the Age of Globalization

Ms Jacques led the group through the section on power and politics. There

is a growing recognition that the time has come to engage the ecumenical movement in a new assessment of politics and power. The churches' understanding of globalization must be a more comprehensive one which does not focus exclusively on the use of economic power. The CCIA commission had reopened the debate at its last meeting through a discussion on the topic "Speaking Truth to Power Today".

Ecumenical reflections on the use of power must take into account the fact that in the context of globalization, power itself – both national and international – is increasingly manifest in economic, intellectual and media circles, which largely escape the reach of the State.

The CCIA Commission proposed to start a process leading to a "Global Consultation on the Changing Role of Power and its Impact on the Churches". It would seek to re-contextualize some of the ideas from previous ecumenical reflections and focus on current global trends. The preparation would involve members of the CCIA commission, experts and different WCC staff teams. The consultation should provide a significant contribution to the ecumenical reflection on power, within the framework of the DOV.

Discussion

The General Secretary expressed his strong support for the consultation on the Changing Role of Power and its Impact on the Churches. The subject had been one of the most important themes of the "just, participatory and sustainable society" process, but it had not been followed up in the Council. Now, by the sheer force of the process of globalization the Council is obliged to return to this discussion. He hoped that the WCC would be able to address this challenge, drawing from different teams and streams and from experts in international law. In this process, the discussion would not be limited to a reflection on economic power, but would be broadened to include political power and the spiritual and cultural dimensions of the debate.

The challenge would be to find a way to harness power dynamics in a manner that allows for humane, just and peaceful global governance, or to make that which already exists, more just and peaceful. A solution which responds to the expectations of the people has not yet been found.

Rev. Tuwere suggested that the Council identify alternatives to globalization as it works on follow up to consultations such as the one held in the Pacific and in other regions. These will vary according to the regional focus. Rev. Kobia explained that future work would focus on alternatives to economic globalization, including proposals which come from the regions.

Recommendation

Following discussion and affirmation of the report in the Programme sub-committee, the Executive Committee ***affirmed*** *the relevance of the proposed plan for holding a "Global Consultation on the Changing Role of Power and its Impact on the Churches" and* ***endorsed*** *the following recommendations from the CCIA Commission:*

a) It should be a process that builds on the history of ecumenical thinking, including the 1937 Oxford Conference, the 1966 Church and Society Conference, the 1981 Consultation on Political Ethics, the Statement of the CUV adopted in Harare, and should take into account the findings of the Special Commission. It would involve continuing follow-up after the Consultation.

b) The process should focus on current global trends and the changing configurations of power, particularly those related to the mandate of CCIA, and on their impact on churches' common witness in society.

c) A preparatory committee comprised of CCIA commissioners and other experts identified in cooperation with other WCC teams should be formed to elaborate the process of consultation.

Given the broad nature of the process envisaged it was also **recommended** that different WCC teams should be part of the reflections. This consultation should provide a significant contribution to the ecumenical reflection on this issue of power identified as one of the thematic foci during the DOV.

HIV/AIDS

The Committee took note of the report on HIV/AIDS, which calls churches to action in the face of the devastation of the epidemic which disastrously effects the lives of individuals, families and communities. It pointed to the injustice bred by global trade practices that count only profits and politics, rather than people or the riches of God's creation. Working with the EAA, the EEF team pointed out that this is an appropriate issue for churches to speak, particularly on causes, prevention, treatment and consequences.

Over the last months the WCC has held thematic seminars, workshops and training programmes, collected and disseminated information about HIV/AIDS, enabled the exchange of materials among churches, and mapped the churches' response to HIV/AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa.

It is imperative that the ecumenical movement address other critically important aspects of the pandemic. These include the structural and social violence of poverty, the influence of structural adjustment programmes which have reversed the progress made in health over the last decades, and gender inequality which make women particularly vulnerable to AIDS.

Plans are underway for a global consultation on the ecumenical response to HIV/AIDS in Africa next November. The consultation is to work out a plan for concerted and coherent efforts to respond to this grave challenge.

The Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance

The EAA has decided to focus on the issues of HIV/AIDS and global trade over the next years, developing an educational approach as well as specific strategies to bring about change. The Ecumenical Advocacy Committee, drawn from the sixty churches and church-related member organizations, held its first meeting last March to develop the four campaign goals which follow:

The Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance and its participants will advocate to:

GOAL I:	Encourage churches to work for the dignity and rights of people living with HIV/AIDS and for an attitude of care and solidarity that rejects all forms of stigmatization and discrimination.
GOAL II:	Promote HIV/AIDS prevention that addresses root causes of vulnerability.
GOAL III:	Increase access to treatment for persons with HIV/AIDS.
GOAL IV:	Mobilize resources to prevent HIV/AIDS and for the care and treatment of people who are infected and affected.

The Global Trade Strategy Group is to meet from 26-28 September 2001 to develop the campaign goals and objectives on trade.

In the discussion that followed, Dr Raiser said that the cooperative approach followed by the Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance and the team on Ecumenical Education and Formation constituted a test case. Efforts to work with the LWF on HIV/AIDS had not succeeded, possibly because of uncertainty about how to use the considerable funds which had been awarded to the LWF for this purpose. The World Conference on Religion and Peace had also received a large donation, but had no experience in working on HIV/AIDS. A successful effort did not depend so much on money, but on the willingness of partners to work together. This was the spirit and intention of the EAA.

Dr Raiser added that his visit to the countries of Southern Africa had made clear to him the debilitating effect that gender discrimination has on the women of the region. There is a desperate need to find a new approach to

questions of human sexuality; it is therefore timely that the WCC has begun a careful process to promote discussion in the churches on the matter. There is evidence that the culture of silence, discrimination and violence that surrounds the subject contributes dramatically to the spread of HIV/AIDS. Education and money will not help the situation unless ways can be found to address the moral problem, especially among young people. This fact has not yet been acknowledged in the development of WCC programmes, but it must be pursued. It will amount to a cultural revolution, not only in Africa, but in many other parts of the world.

Rev. Kobia explained that the WCC and the EAA were working in a complementary way; the WCC study process and conceptual work would feed into the campaign being done by the EAA. This is the beginning of a new working style, and care would be taken to make it as effective as possible.

Dr Kirkpatrick asked whether, following the presentation of these major programme emphases there was a sense that the work of the Council is proceeding in an integrated way. Should we not be in dialogue with CWME, ACT and F&O, for example, to discuss such integration and to facilitate the dialogue about the WCC as a whole? Could this happen in conjunction with a meeting of the Executive Committee?

Rev. Kobia replied that the question had been discussed at the CWME commission meeting. There was a feeling that at staff level, integration was being achieved; this was not the case on the level of commissions and advisory groups. He suggested that the next meetings of the commissions and advisory groups be scheduled in proximity to one another, or that at least the officers of these groups meet together in 2002.

Dr Raiser noted that the need for integration had been in mind when the new structure was drawn up. It was the reason for the creation of the Programme Committee, which was to implement the vision of the CUV on this point. The function of the commissions and advisory groups had been

changed to that of *advisory bodies*, which relate to the Programme Committee. The Programme sub-committee would receive a proposal concerning the creation of a core group to address this question.

Recommendation

Following discussions in the Programme sub-committee, the Executive Committee ***affirmed and commended*** *the work undertaken on HIV/AIDS both by the WCC and the EAA. The Committee further underlined the importance of including the gender and justice approach to the ecumenical response to HIV/AIDS. As emphasized by Konrad Raiser in the wake of his recent visit to Southern Africa*:

"The culture of silence, gender discrimination and violence associated with human sexuality is the most dramatic feature for the spread of HIV/AIDS."

Ongoing Work on Common Baptism

The Committee heard an overview of the recent work on common baptism. In 2000 a consultation was held in Prague which produced a substantial text (the Prague text) which was discussed by the Standing Commission in October 2000. It was decided that further work needed to be done on the text and that it should be sent for comment to theologians and theological institutions. Some 30 responses have so far been received. The text will be revised at a meeting in October 2001.

The Joint Working Group between the WCC and the Roman Catholic Church is also examining the topic – particularly with regard to the ecumenical implications of the recognition of our common baptism. A small drafting group met in Geneva (June 2001) to develop an outline on the basis of suggestions made at last year's plenary meeting of the JWG. It is anticipated that this will be a major part to the JWG report in 2005.

In the discussion which followed, His Holiness Aram I asked why the

study on a common baptism continues to be pursued; it had been addressed in the BEM process and the fruits of that debate are available to the churches. What is being said that is new?

The General Secretary said that although the process is not new, it has entered a new stage following the reception of the BEM. It now seeks to determine whether there are possible consequences for the fellowship or other ecclesial consequences to be drawn. The churches are asking whether there is a need to reflect on a "baptismal ecclesiology". The response of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity states that real communion is not achieved in social relations, but in a sacramental bond linking the churches. This is a new reality which the WCC should have the courage to affirm. The Joint Working Group felt obliged to respond to this in the context of the on-going work in Faith and Order.

75th Anniversary of the Faith and Order Conference

Rev. Kobia reported on the proposal for a special observance of the 75th anniversary of Faith and Order. The matter was referred to the Programme sub-committee for discussion.

Recommendation

At a later session, the Programme sub-committee took note of the plan, and the Executive Committee ***agreed*** *to the proposal to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the First World Conference on Faith and Order on 25 August, the Sunday between the meetings of the Executive and Central Committees in August 2002. It therefore suggested that a thematic focus be chosen for the Central Committee which links the ecclesiological emphases in the work of Faith and Order and the Special Commission. In addition, only the regional focus on Asia should be accepted for thematic plenaries.*

Details of the events will be made available at the Executive Committee meeting in February 2002.

World Conference on Mission and Evangelism

Rev. Kobia reviewed the plans for the conference. These were subsequently discussed in the Programme sub-committee.

Recommendation

*The Programme sub-committee **received** the draft proposal for the next World Conference on Mission and Evangelism and made the following recommendations which were **agreed** by the Executive Committee:*

- The wording of the theme (**"Called in Christ to be Reconciling and Healing Communities"**) should be reconsidered in order to clarify the concept and meaning of "communities/Community".
- There is need for further discussions on the question of dates since the Commission's proposal for early **2005** coincides with the Central Committee meeting and the Central Committee, at its last meeting in Potsdam, "felt that early 2006 would be an appropriate date" for the next Assembly.

Communication Strategy and Information Material

Ms Greenaway reported on the collaboration between Communication and the programme clusters. For many of the themes highlighted in the report, Communication staff have worked closely with colleagues to develop communication strategies for events, consultations, or thematic priorities. The aim is to signal any lack of coherence in material and statements produced by different teams addressing related issues and concerns. Communication works closely with regional communication colleagues in an effort to ensure the cultural and confessional appropriateness of the communication approach.

WCC staff attended the World Association for Christian Communication (WACC) Congress in the Netherlands in July. It focused on the theme

"From Confrontation to Reconciliation". Discussions about the Global Communication Summit being planned by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) focused on the role the churches can play in this process. Ms Greenaway noted that WCC media and web coverage is linking WCC preparations for the UN Conference on Financing for Development (as follow-up to Geneva 2000) with regional consultations on economic globalization being held by the teams on Justice, Peace and Creation and Regional Relations.

During a later session, the Programme sub-committee heard a brief report about the challenge of raising the visibility of the World Council of Churches in an era when there is competition for the attention of church and secular media. The sub-committee also heard that ways are being sought to add to WCC staff the expertise needed to create communication strategy and materials in support of fundraising, especially fundraising activities with potential new donors.

WCC Publications has produced the following title linked to the theme of globalization:

Democratic Contracts for Sustainable and Caring Societies – What Can Churches and Christian Communities Do?: Lewis S. Mudge & Thomas Wieser, eds.

6. SPECIAL COMMISSION ON ORTHODOX PARTICIPATION IN THE WCC

Mr Lemopoulos introduced the report on the Special Commission. The Steering Committee had met 8-10 March 2001. It had noted with satisfaction the reception of the Interim Report by the Central Committee in Potsdam and offered guidelines for the preparation of the subjects suggested for study by the plenary of the Special Commission at its meeting in Cairo last November.

In addition, the Steering Committee had raised questions on (a) how to take note of the changes and developments in the Council's life since the Harare Assembly, both in terms of its programmatic activities and its governing bodies and (b) how better to communicate to the member churches the goals and processes of the Special Commission.

The work in the areas suggested, i.e. the question of (a) decision-making, (b) membership, and (c) a methodology for approaching social and ethical issues is progressing. It is based in some instances on the actual experience of some churches in these areas. Examples of work being done on social and ethical issues are the work of the Ecumenical Patriarchate on environmental questions and that of the Russian Orthodox Church on social teaching. A first draft of the paper on decision-making has been shared with some members of the Special Commission for further consideration. It attempts to show why a move towards consensus decision-making is imperative and suggests some fundamental principles to guide the process.

The Membership Study Group had met 24-27 June 2001 and begun work on the question of the kind of Council envisaged by the Common Understanding and Vision document adopted by the Harare Assembly. The group plans to do a survey on churches received into membership since the Fifth Assembly (Nairobi 1975) as well as one on representation of member churches in the Central Committee since that date.

The Special Commission envisages long-term studies on worship and on ecclesiology as a basis for participation in the ecumenical movement. The first issue of the Ecumenical Review of 2002 will be dedicated to praying together and another issue to ecclesiological issues later in the year.

Discussion

Bishop Koppe noted the importance for the churches of being able to pray and worship together and hoped that some progress on the question could be reported to the plenary meeting of the Special Commission next November. Mr Lemopoulos said that discussions on the question would take place in the November plenary meeting, based on the work being done by Prof. Scouteris. He noted that this question is in the first instance one that concerns the Orthodox Churches among themselves.

Dr Georges Tsetsis commented on the excellent spirit that prevails in the Special Commission and expressed confidence that concrete results would be brought to the next meeting of the Central Committee. Key issues that must be solved before the next assembly include questions about decision-making, equal roles in setting the agenda of the governing bodies, and worshipping and praying together.

Archbishop Nifon cautioned that while the report of the work of the Special Commission had been well received by the Central Committee in Potsdam, concrete proposals had not yet been worked out. He hoped that these could be presented to the plenary meeting of the Special Commission and asked that all the study documents be shared with the Special Commission members in time for careful study and eventual proposals.

Bishop Zacharias noted that the work of the Special Commission would effect changes in the nature and structure of the WCC. It would therefore be important to inform the member churches of the on-going work of the Commission. Dr. Lee said that WCC governing bodies would also need to have more information about the real problems being raised in the Special Commission. This information should be provided on a regular basis so as to avoid dichotomization of the discussion.

Mr Lemopoulos pointed out that the General Secretary reports on the work of the Special Commission through his regular channels of communication with

the member churches and ecumenical bodies. The governing bodies receive regular reports on the work of the Special Commission. In addition a wealth of material about the heritage of the ecumenical movement and its relation to the discussions of the Special Commission can be found on the WCC web site.

The Moderator, H.H. Aram I, had a positive assessment of the work of the Commission. It had generated interest and increased mutual understanding between Protestant and Orthodox member churches. He suggested that increased communication about the work of the WCC would have a positive effect on the attitude of the Orthodox Churches, many of which have little or no knowledge of the Council's activities. Further, he noted that the agenda of the Special Commission was not restricted to questions of Protestant-Orthodox relations, but encompassed all the critical issues on the WCC agenda. He suggested that these matters need to be discussed in the synods of the Orthodox Churches and in gatherings of the Eastern and Oriental Orthodox families, all of which would require some time. This would allow the churches to make a critical and realistic assessment of the work of the Special Commission.

The General Secretary pointed out that the work of the Special Commission would not end with its plenary meeting of next November; a fourth plenary is scheduled for May 2002, at which time further work will be done on the report due to the Central Committee later in the year. The initial mandate of the Special Commission provides for an extension of its work if needed, for example, to effect proposed changes in the Constitution of the Council. Draft changes would then be submitted to the Central Committee of 2003 and circulated to the member churches. The Central Committee of 2005 would review these and take final action before submitting proposals for change to the Ninth Assembly. Full information on the work of the Special Commission and the processes involved would be made available to the governing bodies in time for appropriate action to be taken.

Recommendation

At a later session, the Programme sub-committee ***received*** *the progress report with appreciation and expressed the following thoughts:*

a) it is imperative to think about ways of informing churches and ecumenical partners about the work of the Special Commission preparing them to receive eventual results;

b) members of the Special Commission participating in national and/or regional gatherings should be encouraged to make known the work of the Commission.

The Programme sub-committee agreed that the most crucial issue on the agenda of the Special Commission is the one related to common prayer which constitutes the spiritual foundation of our togetherness.

The Programme sub-committee observed that the way staff perceives positive changes (character of governing bodies' meetings, use of consensual ways of decision-making, more consultation of churches in certain areas of work, etc.) should be further explored.

The Executive Committee ***endorsed*** *the recommendations of the Programme sub-committee.*

7. RELATIONS WITH ORTHODOX CHURCHES

Mr Lemopoulos reviewed the list of visits to Orthodox Churches, including the Serbian Orthodox Church, the Armenian Apostolic Churches of Etchmiadzine and Cilicia, the Russian Orthodox Church and the Orthodox Autocephalous Church of Albania. He remarked on the variety of developments in these churches. The visits have shown that there is a great potential for meaningful participation by the Orthodox Churches in the

ecumenical movement. They have also given the Council a sense of how to deal with some of the obstacles to such participation.

Discussion

Dr Tsetsis agreed that the visit by a WCC delegation to the Serbian Orthodox Church had been positive, but advised that even though the Council could count on a small group of ecumenical friends in the Church, the hierarchy might not be as favorable to increased ecumenical involvement. The visit by a WCC delegation to the Russian Orthodox Church had been a good one. He suggested that it would be helpful to re-read the report on social thought made by the 1983 Pre-Conciliar Pan-Orthodox Conference.

Dr Tsetsis noted the importance of the *International Symposium on Orthodoxy and the Future of Europe* which had been organized by the Institute for Orthodox Christian Studies in Cambridge, U.K., last July. It would be imperative for the WCC to visit churches in Southern Europe, specifically the Orthodox Churches of Greece and Cyprus and the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

The General Secretary noted that several efforts had been made to arrange a visit to the Church of Greece, but these had so far not borne fruit.

In reference to the report on Relations with Orthodox Churches, the Programme sub-committee heard of the communication strategy to raise the visibility of the Orthodox Churches in the life and work of the WCC. A list of actions, activities, productions, and publications prepared during the period since the last meeting of the Executive Committee was shared with the Committee. (Appendix C of the Communication Cluster Activity Report.)

8. REPORT OF THE MEMBERSHIP STUDY GROUP

Mr van Beek introduced the report. The Membership Study Group, set up by the Executive Committee in January 2001, had met last June. It had reviewed a dossier of materials relating to membership in the WCC from the inception of the Council to the creation of the Special Commission and its discussion on the subject. It also reviewed the current criteria, procedure and process for receiving new members into the WCC, the WCC Constitution and Rules, the CUV and the Toronto Statement. All of the foregoing were considered while keeping in mind the overarching perspective suggested to the Group by the Steering Committee of the Special Commission: "*What kind of Council do we envisage in the light of the CUV?*"

In discussing the current criteria for membership, the group agreed "that the fragmentation of churches ought not to be legitimized or rewarded by the WCC, as it is inconsistent with the stated purpose of the fellowship of churches, i.e. to call one another to "visible unity". It identified some further basic questions, including the need to develop ecclesial and or ecclesiological aspects of membership, either as criteria for admission or in some other form and the need to spell out the theological and ecclesiological significance of associations or covenants or other 'groupings' of churches. Regarding Baptism, part of the on-going work of Faith and Order, the Group suggested that the issue should continue to be part of the long-term reflection on membership.

The Group discussed the concept of membership from several perspectives, including the suggestion of the Special Commission to consider an observer status as part of the effort to solve the current problems of membership. It will further explore these questions, using as a guiding principle the concept of "modes of relating" to the fellowship in both a philosophical sense and in constitutional terms.

The Group explored possible groupings of churches, based on tradition or historical establishment, operational inter-communion or regional geographical location, and concluded that each of these had its limitations. Given that the current model of individual representation encourages separation and fragmentation contrary to the purposes of the Council, the Group agreed to further explore the possibility of fashioning a "hybrid' method of structuring membership, such that local churches would be encouraged or required to select an affinity, either confessional or regional, for membership.

The Group agreed to study the suggested 'hybrid model' of membership also as a possible alternative model for the representation of the member churches in the governing bodies.

In discussing the idea of "equal influence" in setting the agenda and in decision-making, the group considered the policy of parity representation from Eastern churches and those of a Western tradition on Executive Committee, or a continuing "oversight" committee. It concluded that while it would probably not be applicable at the level of the governing bodies, it might be used for advisory bodies, study groups, ad-hoc groups, and staff groups, etc.

The next meeting of the Membership Group will take place in November 2001 in Budapest, Hungary. The main agenda items will be: the 'hybrid model', ecclesial aspects of membership, and modes of relating (including observer status).

The Membership Study Group had agreed to forward to the Executive Committee the proposal of the Special Commission to postpone the consideration of applications for membership until the Central Committee meeting in 2003.

Discussion

Dean Gadegaard pointed to the dilemma of exploring "new ways of

relating" to the fellowship and avoiding the fragmentation that was apparent in the "bi-cameral model" which the group proposed to re-visit. The original proposal had been made by Metropolitan Kirill. It would not be possible to accommodate both these ideas.

Dr Kirkpatrick suggested that the Christian World Communions should be drawn into the discussion of membership at an early stage in order to allow them to develop a sense of participation in the work of the Group. He also felt that it would be important to find a way to sustain the sense of direct participation of the member churches in any membership model finally adopted.

H.H. Aram I remarked on the two aspects of the membership question, pointing out that for the Orthodox Churches the question of ecclesiology was paramount, while for the Protestant Churches the institutional aspect was more important. It would be difficult to reconcile these two positions.

Dr Raiser reminded the Executive Committee of the need to insure that the recommendations of the Study Group on Membership and those of the Special Commission on the question are consonant with one another in the reports to the Central Committee of 2002.

In response to a question concerning the legality of suspending membership applications as proposed by the Membership Study Group, Dr Raiser advised that there was no constitutional right of any church to apply for membership. The governing bodies at their discretion can take such actions as that proposed.

Mr Lemopoulos noted that the question of "families" of churches alluded to in the report had also surfaced at the last meeting of the LWF Council. It is also on the agenda of the joint WCC/LWF/WARC in-house group.

The report on the Membership Study Group was referred to the Programme sub-committee, in conjunction with the report on the Special Commission.

Recommendation

Having proposed minor editorial changes, the Programme sub-committee proposed and the Executive Committee agreed to ***receive*** *the document with appreciation and encouraged the Membership Study Group to continue its task along the lines of the report.*

9. RELATIONS WITH CONSTITUENCIES

Mr van Beek introduced the report, which traced the developments since the meeting of the Central Committee in January 2001. He noted the positive development of the WCC-CEC Liaison Group, which meets annually. The group is composed of two members of the governing bodies and two staff members of each of the two organizations. It deals with areas of on-going cooperation, specific issues, such as the Special Commission, and the long-term integration of policy-setting and decisions on programme priorities. At its last meeting (December 2000) the Group began to explore the following issues:

- membership and the study initiated by the WCC;
- mission in Europe (in relation to the World Mission Conference);
- theological education in Central and Eastern Europe;
- coordinating or combining visits to churches in Europe.

Mr van Beek reviewed the list of visits to member churches and visits by churches and ecumenical bodies to the WCC. He noted that the Council had been represented at the assemblies of various church and ecumenical bodies, often by members of the governing bodies.

The General Secretary had visited a number of the member churches during this period, accompanied in some instances by members of the staff and the governing bodies. The Committee had been informed of these through the report made by the General Secretary earlier in this meeting.

Other staff members had made numerous visits to member churches for meetings and consultations on specific areas of common concern. In addition, delegations from various member churches, regional ecumenical bodies and Christian World Communions had visited the Council or had invited WCC representatives to attend their meetings.

A network of ecumenical officers had held its 4th global meeting in Bucharest. The Executive of the Joint Working Group had met in Rome and the group had a plenary meeting in Northern Ireland. H.E. Cardinal Kasper had been welcomed in his new responsibilities on the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity. The Joint Consultative Group with Pentecostals had its second meeting in Quito, Ecuador

Ms Pirri-Simonian reported on developments in the Joint Working Group. She noted the on-going study processes on Baptism, the ecclesiological implications of RCC membership in NCCs and REOs, the nature and purpose of dialogue, inter-church marriage, theological anthropology, social thought and action and a focus on the DOV. The final outcome of these studies will be presented to the Ninth Assembly.

Ms Pirri-Simonian reported that the Conference of General Secretaries of the Christian World Communions would this year hold its annual meeting in Geneva.

The WCC has a special relationship with the LWF. The two organizations, along with WARC, are holding discussions on how to pool financial resources and coordinate assembly processes.

Discussion

The Moderator, H.H. Aram I, welcomed the report on collaboration with the CEC. It could provide a model for collaboration with other regional ecumenical bodies; it embodied the principles of the CUV. The Moderator proposed that in future the report on relations with constituencies include

some evaluation and identification of emerging trends and challenges in the life of the ecumenical family.

In reply to a question concerning the Joint Consultative Group with Pentecostals, Mr van Beek reported that there had been some progress as measured in the improved atmosphere and level of comfort of the Pentecostal members in discussions with the other members. However, the time had not yet come for common formulation on any matters. The group has been invited by the Assemblies of God to hold its next meeting in Korea.

Mr van Beek noted that the group included representatives of WCC member churches who thus have a chance to dialogue with representatives of the Pentecostals about a range of issues, including what it means to be a church.

In response to a question concerning the proposed Forum, Mr van Beek noted that there had been no meeting since the continuation committee in December 2000. At that time, the group had begun to plan for a more representative meeting of 60-70 persons, for which funding had now been found. A consultation is scheduled for June 2002. The aim of the meeting is to move forward the process of consultation between Pentecostals and Evangelicals. Participants are to include representatives of Christian World Communions, the Roman Catholic Church and Orthodox Churches, as a mirror reflection of a possible Forum.

The report on Relations with Constituencies was received with appreciation.

Recommendation

*The Programme sub-committee **recommended** and the Executive Committee **agreed** that at one of the two Executive Committee meetings each year there be a report on relationships with the Regional Ecumenical*

Organisations. This may include issues arising from the Liaison Groups with REOs, the annual meeting of the General Secretaries of the REOs and the WCC, and other meetings involving the REOs and the WCC.

10. PUBLIC ISSUES

Rev. Epps presented the report on Public Issues. He reviewed the various follow-up actions taken by the WCC following the last meeting of the Central Committee, drawing attention to the plight of uprooted people and the dramatic situation of the refugees who had been rescued from a sinking ship off the Indonesian coast and then denied government permission to land and seek asylum status. This had occurred after the report had been written. The WCC letter to the Australian churches on this matter had been appreciated.

Consultation on Justice, Peace and People's Security in Northeast Asia

He highlighted the important Consultation on Justice, Peace and People's Security in Northeast Asia, convened in Kyoto in late February 2001. It brought together some 40 representatives of National Christian Council in Japan, the National Council of Churches in Korea, the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan, the China Christian Council (CCC) and the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA) as well as of ecumenical partners in Europe and North America. The consultation was organized in cooperation with the Council for World Mission, whose General Secretary and Moderator attended. It was the first time that representatives of the CCC had attended a meeting where international policy questions were discussed in the presence of representatives of the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan.

The consultation reviewed several particular points of continuing tension in the region, among them the difficult question of differences with respect to the "One China Policy" of the People's Republic of China. This led to significant and still unresolved debates between representatives of the

China Christian Council and the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan present at the meeting.

West Africa Interfaith Peace Initiative

Another important undertaking had been the West Africa Interfaith Peace Initiative. In response to the critical and worsening situation in West Africa involving most centrally Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, the WCC, in cooperation with the regional ecumenical fellowship (FECCIWA) and consultation with the AACC, convened in April a consultation of interfaith councils of churches in the region to determine what might be done to strengthen mediation efforts. It was the first time that an international encounter of this nature had taken place in Africa. In a declaration adopted at the meeting, the participants committed themselves to take specific steps to resolve the conflict and restore peace to the region. They included working with the Heads of States in their countries, the UNHCR and civil society actors, specifically with reference to the protection of refugees, and the reduction of cross-border proliferation of small arms.

Finally, Rev. Epps drew the attention of the Committee to the document entitled *A Policy Framework and Guidelines on Small Arms.* It had been adopted by the forty-fourth meeting of the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs, and shared with all United Nations member states prior to the UN Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, held 9-20 July in New York.

Discussion

Ms Justice Adinyira expressed appreciation for the WCC work to facilitate peace making at the grass-roots level. The Council had created a space for the various parties concerned to dialogue with one another. This was an essential element in the resolution of conflict.

Proposed actions

Rev. Epps then presented draft actions on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and the situation in Zimbabwe.

With respect to Zimbabwe, he recalled the critical economic situation that was apparent at the time of the Eighth Assembly and had grown worse since then. This was partly due to the increasingly unfavorable situation of global markets, but also the consequence of the meteoric costs of Zimbabwe's participation in the war in the Democratic Republic of Congo (reported in 2000 as having reached the level of US$ 1 million per day). Rising demands of international financial institutions and traditional aid partners for radical structural adjustments further complicated the problems. A joint WCC/AACC ecumenical delegation visited Zimbabwe in late May 2000 to listen to the churches around the country about the general national climate, and to determine how best to respond to the Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC) request for international ecumenical election monitors for the parliamentary elections. The report of the delegation pointed to the rising tide of violence in the country and highlighted the issue of land redistribution as fundamental problem remaining from the period of colonial rule.

In mid-July, an unprecedented meeting of church leaders was organized by the ZCC at Victoria Falls to consult about the national situation. The consultation prepared an extensive report, the substance of which was released in late August, on the eve of a brief visit to Harare by the WCC General Secretary, in the form of a pastoral letter to the nation. In the light of this courageous witness, and with the encouragement of Zimbabwean church leaders, the Executive Committee was asked to adopt a statement in support of the action of the Zimbabwe Council of Churches.

Discussion

In discussion on the draft resolution on Zimbabwe, the following comments were made:

- The churches in Zimbabwe were under increasing pressure to take a stand on the economic and political situation. The newly elected president of the Council, Bishop Moyo, had taken a significant lead in convening the Victoria Falls meeting.

- Zimbabwe is confronted with famine. The situation could provoke increasing violence. The churches in the region will stand in solidarity with the churches in Zimbabwe

- The churches in Zimbabwe were particularly susceptible to acts of violence now, and the churches should be alert to the need to offer them assistance as required.

Draft Resolution on Ecumenical Response to the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict

Rev. Epps highlighted the salient points of the draft resolution on the ecumenical response to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. An ecumenical delegation had been sent to Palestine and Israel last June, and the General Secretary had convened church representatives and others involved in the resolution of the conflict to a meeting in Geneva in August. That important meeting was co-chaired by the Moderator. He drew attention to the report on these actions that had been circulated to the Committee. He outlined the recommendations, which emerged from the August 2001 consultation.

Discussion

In reply to comments about equating Zionism with racism, Dr. Raiser noted that there was no need to respond to the debates which emerged at the Durban World Conference against Racism. On these matters the official position of the WCC had been made public in various documents issued beginning in 1972, at which time the WCC rejected the idea of equating Zionism with racism.

In reference to the draft resolution on the ecumenical response to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, clarification was requested concerning the suggested international boycott of goods produced by Israeli settlements in the occupied territories. Rev. Epps said that peace groups in Israel have produced a list of such products and this could be made available.

Dr Raiser reminded the Executive Committee that the proposed resolution was a "procedural resolution" on a specific purpose of follow-up by the Central Committee in Potsdam. It should not be turned into a further policy statement, though it clearly had policy implications.

Bishop Young expressed his appreciation for the draft resolution and suggested that supporting background information interpreting the situation be widely shared with the churches.

Bishop Zacharias commented that the resolution represents a new and concrete step by the world church to take the side of the oppressed against the oppressor.

Dean Gadegaard noted that his church had already decided to support such a boycott. He asked the Council to be ready to provide convincing information about the origin of goods produced in the occupied territories.

Dr Masango expressed his support of the resolution, recalling how important WCC support of the anti-apartheid movement had been to South Africans in their struggle.

Bishop Koppe welcomed the resolution. He asked how it could be implemented without the presence of an ecumenical structure in Jerusalem. He suggested that the collaboration of Christian and Jewish groups that have been in dialogue over the years be sought to help resolve the conflict. Bishop Koppe reported that the EKD Council was preparing a statement to

underline the fact that Zionism could not be considered a manifestation of racism.

Dr Raiser explained that the creation of an ecumenical structure in Jerusalem would require the approval of the three member churches there. The MECC has expressed the urgent need for such a body. But until now, no response had been received from the member churches on this matter.

Other comments on the draft resolution included the suggestions to

- call on the Palestinians to restrain from violence
- to underline that the conflict is not a religious one
- to identify the core issues in the search for justice as the illegal occupation of Palestinian territories

Rev. Epps thanked the Committee for its comments. He reminded the Committee that the approval of this resolution was a serious decision, since it would certainly be controversial, particularly for those uncritical of Israel. However, as in so many difficult situations in the past, the WCC had to stand for justice and peace between poles of opposition. Its stance on apartheid and on decolonization in Southern Africa drew many attacks. Yet its consistency built a confidence among the people of the region that in later years allowed the WCC to play unique roles in mediating conflicts.

The report on Public Issues, and the draft resolutions on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and on Zimbabwe were referred to the Public Issues sub-committee for discussion and action.

11. REPORT OF THE PUBLIC ISSUES COMMITTEE

In a subsequent session, Dr Tsetsis, member of the Public Issues Committee, presented the report. The Public Issues Committee took into account the proposals made for amendments to the draft Resolution on the Ecumenical Response to the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict and revised the

text accordingly. Further discussions were held on the draft statement on Zimbabwe, and the draft was substantially revised for clarity.

Recommendation

The Public Issues Committee ***recommended*** *and the Executive Committee* ***adopted*** *the following resolution:*

Resolution on the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict

The Executive Committee of the World Council of Churches, meeting in Geneva, 11-14 September 2001,

1. ***alarmed and dismayed*** by the escalation of violence in the Holy Land since the Central Committee adopted its last "Minute on the Situation in the Holy Land After the Outbreak of the Second Palestinian Uprising," in Potsdam, February 2001;

2. ***expresses its profound condolences*** to all the victims of the conflict, and especially to the families of those who have been killed in both Palestine and Israel;

3. ***recalls and reaffirms*** the policies of the World Council of Churches on the pursuit of a just peace in the Middle East, and for the status of Jerusalem; and its commitment to active dialogue among Christians, Muslims and Jews;

4. ***reiterates*** its appeal to the parties directly involved and to the international community to bring an end to aggressive acts and the violence that have again overtaken the Holy Land and threaten international peace and security;

5. ***welcomes and affirms*** the initiatives undertaken by the General Secretary and staff of the World Council of Churches in implementing

the recommendations of the Central Committee in Potsdam by promoting an active, coordinated ecumenical response to end the illegal occupation of Palestine; expressing solidarity with the churches and Christian Communities most directly affected; and providing auspices for member churches to develop a plan of concerted non-violent ecumenical action to protect vulnerable communities in Palestine and to promote an end to the hostilities;

6. ***requests the WCC General Secretary and staff*** to continue and intensify their facilitating and coordinating role for ecumenical advocacy, networking, communication and active solidarity with the victims of the conflict;

7. ***welcomes and endorses*** the recommendations of the WCC delegation to Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories including Jerusalem in June 2001 as further developed by the International Ecumenical Consultation on the Palestinian - Israeli Conflict held in Geneva, 6-7 August 2001:

   7.1. ***develop an accompaniment programme*** that would include an international ecumenical presence based on the experience of the Christian Peacemakers Team;

   7.2. ***call upon the WCC member churches and ecumenical partners,*** in the context of the Decade to Overcome Violence: Churches Seeking Reconciliation and Peace, ***to focus attention in 2002 on intensive efforts to End the Illegal Occupation of Palestine,*** and to participate actively in coordinated ecumenical efforts in this connection;

   7.3. ***consider the organization of an International Conference on the Illegal Occupation of Palestine,*** bringing together representatives of the churches, ecumenical partner organizations, competent international bodies, scholars and experts in 2002 as part of the

special ecumenical focus on efforts to End the Occupation of Palestine;

7.4. ***call for*** an international boycott of goods produced in the illegal Israeli settlements in the occupied territories;

7.5. ***call on member churches and Christians*** to

7.5.1 ***join in non-violent acts of resistance*** to the destruction of Palestinian properties and to forced evictions of people from their homes and lands; and

7.5.2 ***join in international prayer vigils*** to strengthen the "chain of solidarity" with the Palestinian people;

8. ***calls upon member churches and ecumenical funding partners*** to respond as a matter of urgency to this appeal, and to make available the necessary resources for the WCC to be able to fulfill its tasks and responsibilities in relationship to the proposed coordinated ecumenical action plan;

9. ***requests the General Secretary*** to bring the present resolution to the attention of member churches, ecumenical partners, competent UN bodies and specialized agencies, regional intergovernmental bodies and to Governments of their member states, and to make a progress report on implementation to the next meeting of the Executive Committee.

Statement on Zimbabwe

The Public Issues Committee ***recommended*** *and the Executive Committee* ***adopted*** *the following resolution:*

The Executive Committee of the World Council of Churches, meeting in Geneva, 11-14 September 2001, expresses its deep appreciation to the Zimbabwe Council of Churches and to the church leaders for the Pastoral Letter to the Nation made public in Harare in late August of this year.

The member churches of the WCC have become increasingly concerned about the deteriorating economic and social situation in Zimbabwe and the rising tide of violence there. Part of this violence has been instigated by the encouragement given by the government of Zimbabwe to the War Veterans to occupy white-owned commercial farms. These invasions have claimed many lives of both white and black citizens. Compounding this violence were widespread acts of political intimidation in the months before the 2000 parliamentary elections. These have continued almost unabated. Early this year, the War Veterans began to attack and occupy private businesses.

Pressures applied by international financial institutions for structural adjustments of Zimbabwe's economy have exacerbated the impact on the people of the nation by further undermining the social welfare system and public health services at a time when the HIV/AIDS pandemic had already stretched it to the limits.

Zimbabwe's African neighbors and others around the world have been deeply troubled by all these developments in this nation that they had regarded to be a model of how racial tolerance, economic development and political democracy can contribute to a successful transition from colonial rule.

The WCC has a deep and long-standing attachment to the people of this land and to their churches. This began during the period of colonial rule, continued through the struggle for independence, has been sustained in the years since, and was renewed with the holding of the Eighth WCC Assembly in Harare in December 1998.

The ZCC pastoral letter reflects our concerns and has been issued at a critical time. Its urgent call for an open national dialogue on the crucial issues facing the country was warmly welcomed by the people of Zimbabwe. It makes clear and constructive recommendations on ways to lead the society as a whole away from the brink of self-destruction. These

are addressed to the government, all political parties, the private sector and civil society as a whole. We sincerely hope that no particular addressee, especially the government and the ruling party, will view it as an attack on them or their institutions; but rather that all will welcome the church leaders' offer to facilitate the national dialogue and cooperate with them in pursuit of non-violent approaches to conflict transformation.

It is noteworthy that the church leaders have chosen to assume responsibility for their own national situation, and have made little reference to those outside Zimbabwe's borders whose impact is continually felt in this land. It is crucial, however, that the international community also take the churches' words to heart. Threats of further economic sanctions or to suspend all foreign aid until after the 2002 presidential elections could well impair the national dialogue and push Zimbabwe over the edge.

We therefore commend the approach taken by the recent Commonwealth meeting in Abuja, Nigeria. It recognizes the fact that "Land is at the core of the crisis in Zimbabwe and cannot be separated from other issues of concern...such as the rule of law, respect for human rights, democracy and the economy. A programme of land reform is, therefore, crucial to the resolution of the problem."

Zimbabweans are capable of restoring responsible governance, the rule of law and the democratic process in their country, and can put in place a responsible process of land reform that will do justice to all involved. They cannot, however, do this alone. International financial institutions, and especially those governments that made financial commitments to facilitate a fair process of peaceful land redistribution during the Lancaster House independence negotiations, must fully assume their obligations as well. In Abuja, the United Kingdom renewed its commitment. We hope that the U.S.A. will follow suit. Without these nations' assistance and the

international community's understanding and help, the nation will remain in jeopardy.

We continue to pray fervently that the people of Zimbabwe, their government, political parties and civil society as a whole will heed the call of the churches now, before it is too late. May God continue to bless and guide Zimbabwe in this critical hour of need.

12. PROPOSAL FOR A CORE GROUP OF THE PROGRAMME COMMITTEE

The Programme sub-committee discussed the proposal for a core group of the Programme sub-committee. It ***recommended*** *and the Executive Committee* ***approved*** *the following proposals*:

a) That a core group of the Programme Committee be appointed, consisting of 6 members of the PC. The possibility of inviting members on a rotating basis in the 18-month interim period between two Central Committee meetings could be explored (especially taking into consideration the heavy demands from some members of governing and/or consultative bodies).

b) The core group would have to fulfill a preparatory/planning task. Decision-making authority would remain with the Programme Committee. That the core group takes part in the WCC's Round Table (17-18 April 2002).

c) That the Round Table be followed by a two-day meeting of the Programme Committee core group (total meeting time might be five days), preparing for the Central Committee meeting in August 2002.

d) The agenda for the core group meeting should include:
- Documents for information;

- An annotated agenda for the Programme Committee meeting;
- A draft report for the Programme Committee, to be finalized by the directors before mailing to Central Committee.

13. EVALUATION OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE

Mr Lemopoulos pointed out that this was the first time such an extensive evaluation of the Central Committee had been carried out. It included input from the members, the host church, the local organizing committee, the clusters and the various in-house committees which had taken part in the preparations for the meeting. He thanked the EKD for providing the Council with this valuable learning opportunity.

Mr Lemopoulos indicated the fundamental questions which must be addressed by the Executive Committee in reference to future Central Committee meetings. These pertain to the purpose and style of the Central Committee meetings, the venue and the frequency. These would be discussed in more detail in the Programme sub-committee.

Venue

Dr Raiser reminded the members that the Council had received an invitation to hold the next Central Committee meeting in Indonesia. The Presbyterian Church of Korea had also invited the Central Committee to hold its 2002 meeting there, but had decided to reserve the invitation for a later date in light of the fact that the Korean Methodist Church intended to invite the WCC to hold the Ninth Assembly there. Dr Lee urged the Executive Committee therefore to accept the invitation from the Christian Evangelical Church in Minahasa, given that the next Central Committee would have a regional focus on Asia.

Rev. Lakawa reported that the Church of Minahasa was prepared to host the Central Committee meeting in 2002. It would provide an opportunity for the members to experience in concrete situations many of the concerns

on the agenda of the Central Committee, such as peace-making and conflict resolution and the adverse effects of economic globalization. She advised the Executive Committee however, to ask that the invitation be deferred to a later date.

The present assumption is that the next meeting would take place in Geneva.

Frequency

The Finance Committee of January 2001 had recommended that the Council keep to an 18-month cycle for the meeting (with the exception of 2002-2003), given the present level of staffing as well as the framework and the purpose and style of the Central Committee.

Dr Raiser suggested dates for future meetings of the governing bodies. These would be discussed in the Staffing and Nominations sub-committee.

Other Aspects of the Evaluation

Mr Lemopoulos pointed to the financial aspect of the meeting as reported in the Evaluation Report. Total expenditure had been CHF 630,000, compared to CHF 880,000 for the 1999 meeting of the Central Committee in Geneva. The savings could be attributed, i.a. to a reduction in the amount of subsidies paid, the timing of the meeting outside of the high season and the favorable exchange rate between the Swiss Franc and the D-Mark.

The report indicated that many participants would have liked more time to inter-act with the local churches, fewer evening meetings and more time for in-depth discussion. At the same time, many would like the meeting to be shortened from the present 9 days to a week or less.

The General Secretary explained that earlier Central Committee meetings had been longer, stretching over a two-week period. The present 9-day schedule, calling for business and thematic sessions during the day, ad-hoc meetings as requested by various groups during the evenings, and a weekend for the preparation of reports and inter-action with local congregations seemed to be the optimal arrangement to meet the requirements of the WCC to do its business and to provide opportunities to deepen the fellowship. It would be advisable to inform the members of the Central Committee of the basic rationale underlying the building of the agenda.

Discussion

Dr Best said that it would be important to be clear about the purpose of *Padares*. If they are to provide input into the Committees the schedule should make this possible. If the purpose were to allow for inter-action and sharing among the participants, the timing would be less important. Dr Best felt that the call for Bible studies which emerged from the evaluation could be accommodated during discussion in small groups at the tables.

The report pointed to the problem of the relationships between some of the Committees, notably between the Programme and PRII Committees, both of which are new committees. The arrangement to have some members of the Programme Committee attend the meeting of the Finance Committee had also proved to be problematic, as had the method of staff reports to the Programme Committee and from the Programme Committee to the Central Committee. These questions will need careful consideration before the next Central Committee meeting.

Dr Tsetsis noted that some members had to resolve the problem of attending both the meeting of the Executive Committee and the Finance Committee. He also advised that more thought be given to how the moderators of commissions and advisory groups might effectively participate in the Central Committee meetings of the Programme Committee, given that they do not attend the preparatory meeting of the

latter. He reminded the group that the commissions and advisory groups had no decision-making power, but had an advisory function to the programmatic teams.

Dr Best expressed a concern for keeping the financial situation of the Council in mind in planning for the meetings of the Programme Committee prior to the Central Committee. She also recommended that ways be found to provide fuller information about WCC programme plans to all members of the Central Committee. Recommendations to address the aforementioned problems would be made to the Programme sub-committee.

The Moderator suggested that the Evaluation Report be shared in revised form with all members of the Central Committee.

14. REPORT OF THE FINANCE SUB-COMMITTEE

Justice Sophia Adinyira moderated the session. She invited Bishop McKinley Young to present the report of the sub-committee.

Financial Statements 31 December 2000

The Financial Statements of 31 December 2000 reported an operating loss of CHF 750,000. The Council's auditors, KPMG, issued their opinion in June 2001 confirming that the statements present fairly the financial position of the Council. The Council's Audit Committee has approved the audited financial statements for publishing.

Recommendation

The Finance sub-committee ***recommended*** *and the Executive Committee* ***agreed*** *to ratify the Audit Committee's approval of the Financial Statements of 31 December 2000.*

Delegation of Powers for the Appointment of the Council's Auditors

The Audit Committee of the Council is composed of external professionals appointed by the Council to review annually the audit reports and issues for management's attention arising from the financial audit; to issue specific audit mandates, negotiating their cost; and to review the continuing quality of the audit services provided. The Executive Committee holds the authority to appoint the auditors.

Recommendation

The Finance sub-committee ***recommended*** *and the Executive Committee* ***agreed*** *to delegate to the Audit Committee the powers to review the continuance of the present auditors' mandate, and to decide upon either their re-appointment or the appointment of new auditors for the year 2002.*

Operating Results Seven Months January to July 2001

The Finance sub-committee reviewed in further detail the financial report which had been presented to the Executive Committee in the Preliminary Finance Report. It was noted that the July deficit of CHF 1,694,000 already exceeds the budgeted deficit for the whole year of CHF 1,632,000. Contributions income was slightly under target, and was compensated in part by an increase in production and miscellaneous income, representing mainly rental of office space to other organizations. Staff costs and all other costs are being successfully managed and controlled within budget. Investment results of a loss of CHF 354,000 together with foreign currency losses of CHF 212,000 were the principal factors responsible for the deficit to date.

Discussion

Mr Robert Christeler explained that the Council has no control over the performance of financial markets. The Investment Advisory Group, as

commissioned by the Executive Committee in Berlin in January 2001, had reviewed investment risks and the portfolio structure. Steps had been taken since that date to reduce market exposure and define and implement a more conservative investment profile. Sustained execution of these guidelines is expected to result in the long term in a more stable but lower return, estimated by the Council's bankers at 5.5% per annum. Other measures to control spending include e.g. a moratorium on staff positions for certain periods on a case-by-case basis and the deferral or cancellation of meetings or travel plans.

Budget 2002 and Framework to 2004

Mr Christeler presented the schedule 2002 – 2004 Summary Financial Statements. He commented on the new Activity-Based Costing accounting approach, which from 2002 would result in the preparation of a consolidated income and expense budget including both operating and activity reports. Application of the financial plan as presented in this schedule would result in a deficit of CHF 1,277,000 in 2002, a deficit of CHF 1,075,000 in 2003, and the achievement of breakeven in 2004. The Council's General Reserve, now at CHF 4,780,000, has to be borne in mind when contemplating these planned deficits together with anticipated losses in the year 2001.

He outlined the assumptions which underlie this draft financial plan. The most important assumptions concerned the containment of salary costs, accounting for 40% of the total expenses of the Council. The Director also emphasized the risks which place in jeopardy the achievement of the targets set in the financial plan. Clear policies would need to be developed to facilitate the successful implementation of the plan.

Discussion

In the ensuing discussion the following questions were asked:

- Was it responsible to forecast such high deficits in light of the financial situation? Should the Committee not be given alternative proposals?
- Should the WCC depend on financial markets to balance its budget? Would it not be advisable to invest solely in short-term bonds?
- Reserves are ordinarily used for unexpected developments. Is the use of 75% of WCC's reserves over a three-year period justifiable?
- What factors account for the dramatic difference in the deficit figures for 2003 and 2004?

On the forecast deficits, Mr Christeler explained that the figures given are the result of a set of assumptions; these could be challenged. He noted that the Staff Leadership Group meets every week, reviews financial statements every month, and participates in translating assumptions into budget numbers. A change of course at this point would need to be carefully weighted in light of the potential to be self-defeating. This scenario represents a set of calculated risks, which are constantly being checked.

On investments, Ms Dykes, Finance Manager, informed the Committee that the investment portfolio does now hold approximately 70% deposits and Swiss, US and Euro bonds, including both government and commercial issues. The investment guidelines had been reviewed, with adjustments to the portfolio structure begun in February. The gradual restructuring had not resulted in realised losses to the investment portfolio. According to the Council's bankers, the investment portfolio is now positioned to earn a return of 5.5% annually over the long term.

The use of 75% of the general reserve is not devoid of risk; however the 3-year figures 2002-2004 given reflect a set of assumptions regarding income development, cost structure and investment returns. Under these assumptions, in the present situation the use of a significant part of the Council's reserves is a responsible course to be taken; other alternative approaches might involve measures that render the Council ineffective in implementing its programmes.

As for the difference in the deficit figures for 2003 and 2004, Mr Christeler explained that the investment in new systems, tools and instruments should enable Communication to increase book, video, and photo sales. The completion of renovation and remodeling work in the building should allow an increase in rental income. In addition, the termination of the renovation project in Bossey should reverse the drop in guesthouse income and increase after 2003. In reference to the deficit of 2001, negotiations were beginning with traditional donors, some of which had indicated at the Round Table that they would be willing to increase their contributions to reduce the deficit.

It is further assumed that the income development strategy would produce results within a period of two to three years; the membership campaign by 2005. Operations income from agencies would perhaps begin to stabilize and increase after 2003.

Recommendation

The Finance sub-committee ***recommended*** *and the Executive Committee* ***agreed*** *to support and direct efforts to define policies which would work towards implementation of the financial plan presented and result in significantly lower deficits. The Executive Committee* ***endorsed*** *the recommendation.*

Pension Fund

The Central Committee at Potsdam had mandated the General Secretary to commission a study on the feasibility of changing the structure of the Council's pension fund plan. This study was to be commissioned for two reasons. Firstly, despite the Pension Fund's good standing under Swiss regulations, actuarial calculations made under International Accounting Standards required the Council to disclose a significant unfunded liability to the Pension Fund in a note in its financial statements at 31 December 2000. Further, in complying with the Accounting Standards going forward,

there is a risk that actual liabilities to the Pension Fund may require to be recorded with direct impact on the Council's financial results. Secondly, the pension fund structure demands employers' contributions which vary year by year, raising issues of budgetary control.

After review of the first phase of the study as commissioned, both the Council and the Pension Fund conclude that the existing pension fund plan should remain in place. Unlike the revised plan structure considered, the existing plan is based on solidarity and meets better the values of the Council and its objective of fairness in compensation.

Recommendation

The Finance sub-committee ***recommended*** *and the Executive Committee* ***agreed*** *to de-commission the second phase of the pension fund study, and retain the existing defined benefits pension plan. In addition the Executive Committee endorsed and encouraged the efforts of the Pension Fund Board and the Council to finalize a comfort letter which would present a satisfactory legal solution to this accounting issue.*

Ecumenical Information Sharing Platform

The Project Management Team Manager presented a demonstration of the Ecumenical Information Sharing Platform, currently at the beginning of its design phase. The Platform would provide an Internet forum for sharing information and promoting exchanges between members and agencies worldwide. Planned for launch in 2002, the Platform would represent an important landmark for the Council.

The Moderator gave his thanks for the presentation and recognized that the EISP would be a major collaborative asset to the Council.

Income Generation

The Director of Income Monitoring and Development presented an overview of the Membership Campaign adopted during the Eighth Assembly. The Campaign sets an annual target of CHF 10 million, with the concurrent objective that all members contribute an annual fee. At present, annual membership contributions amount to CHF 6.5 million. In implementing the Campaign, the Director emphasized the importance which would be placed on respect, appreciation and dialogue. The Finance sub-committee believes there is a need to raise awareness on the part of the member churches, and that clear communication on the needs and active role of the Council would be effective. In addition, the view was expressed that a different approach may need to be adopted towards different regions or sub-regions.

The minimum annual contribution has not increased since 1995 and is set at CHF 1,000. While those members who have failed to contribute might be requested to pay the minimum, a different approach may be appropriate for contributing member churches. Contributing churches might be requested to match or exceed their prior year contributions. These arguments were set out in a letter to be sent to member churches.

Discussion

The following comments were made:

- It was evident that not all member churches would be in a position to pay a membership fee.
- The payment of a minimum fee constitutes a sign of commitment and promotes the credibility of the Council in the eyes of those who regularly meet their financial obligations. The matter had been

discussed at the Harare Assembly and agreed by the churches.

- The letter would serve its purpose if it at least provokes a response from churches which have never met their financial obligations nor given any explanation for their inability to do so. The question could then be discussed.
- A way should be found to enable churches in countries with currency restrictions to meet their obligations.
- The churches should be made aware of the far-reaching implications of the decision, especially of the fact that they should not expect subsidies to participate in WCC assemblies if they do not pay their fees.
- The churches need a clear signal from the Executive Committee underlining the seriousness of the financial situation of the Council. Further, they should be reminded of their financial obligation as set out in WCC Rules.
- Non-financial contributions, such as hospitality offered by the churches, should be taken into consideration for churches otherwise unable to make a financial contribution.

Recommendation

The Finance sub-committee ***recommended*** *and the Executive Committee* ***agreed*** *to approve the letter of 10 September 2001 and the following guidelines to be applicable from 1 January 2002: that only delegates of contributing member churches will be eligible for subsidy to participate in the decision-making bodies of the WCC, and only representatives of contributing member churches will be eligible for subsidy to attend any WCC meetings or events.*

Balance Sheet Review

A schedule comparing the Council's balance sheet structure in 1999 and 2000 was reviewed, with the purpose of highlighting the current state of

financial health, and considering whether corrective actions should or can be taken.

The review highlighted the fact that a total reduction in the reserves of CHF 3,722,000 had been suffered in 2000. This reduction is composed in part by the operating loss of CHF 750,000 recorded in 2000, but also includes the drawings on the investment reserves and property fund reserves made in the same year.

Following the concept that a liability which may fall payable in the short or medium term should be covered by an asset which should be realizable in that same timeframe, the review matched liabilities with the related covering assets. The matching highlighted reduced margin coverages which are indicative of potential cash-flow issues for the Council.

In this context, a review of Programme Funds is to be conducted to determine whether any of them might properly be considered to have been designated by the Council rather than by a donor. Such recategorization would free the Council from the responsibility to hold a realizable asset to meet the fund concerned.

Recommendation

The Finance sub-committee ***recommended*** *and the Executive Committee* ***agreed*** *to request from staff that a Balance Sheet review be prepared and presented for the Executive Committee meeting of February 2002.*

15. REPORT OF THE STAFFING AND NOMINATIONS SUB-COMMITTEE

Dr Marion Best moderated the closed session and Ms Adinyira presented the report of the sub-committee.

Appointments

The Executive Committee authorized the General Secretary to proceed with the following appointments, contract extensions, the legal obligations of the World Council of Churches to be binding only as from the actual signing by both parties of the corresponding contracts or contract extensions.

Bossey – Ecumenical Institute: **Dr. Elizabeth Tapia**
Communication, Publications and Documentation: **Mr. Manuel Kromer**. If he is unable to accept the invitation, Mr. Eloy Teckemeier should be appointed.

Contract Extensions

The contract extensions listed below are for three years unless otherwise stated.

Bossey: Ecumenical Institute: **Prof. Dr. Julio de Santa Ana** (for one year, final extension)

Communication: Directorate: **Ms. Kristine Greenaway**

Finance, Services and Administration:

Human Resources: **Ms. Angelica Espinoza**
Controllership: **Ms. Joan Geuss and Mr. Costandi Mustaklem**

Issues and Themes: Directorate: **Rev. Dr. Samuel Kobia**
Faith and Order: **Rev. Dr. Thomas Best**
Education and Ecumenical Formation: **Rev. Dr. Nyambura Njoroge**
Mission and Evangelism: **Rev. Jacques Matthey**, **Dr. Manoj Kurian** and **Rev. Fr. Kwame Labi**

Regional Relations: **Dr. Marina Rizk** and **Dr. William Temu**
International Relations: **Dr. Elizabeth Ferris** and **Mr. Clement John**

The Executive Committee confirmed the following appointments or contract extensions made by the General Secretary or the Officers:

Bossey: **Mr. Luc Hegetschweiler,** Hotel Manager
ACT: **Ms. Mieke Weeda,** Asia Appeals Officer
Public Information: **Mr. Peter Williams** (contract extension)

The Executive Committee authorized the Officers to fill vacancies that must be filled prior to its next meeting.

Procedures for Election of General Secretary

After careful discussion and reflection, the Committee decided to maintain the current procedures for election of a General Secretary (cf. Minutes CC 1987, App. V, and 1992, App. III). It recommended that clearer guidelines be given such as: desired representation from women, youth and Orthodox churches, regional and confessional balances, etc. These are to be brought to the Executive Committee meeting in February 2002.

It was suggested that a list of Central Committee members, with their churches, regional origin, etc. be prepared to aid members in the election of a Search Committee.

New Members of Central Committee, Commissions and Advisory Groups

The Executive Committee ***recommended*** *to the Central Committee:*

- to appoint **Rev. Pakoa B. Maraki** in replacement of Rev. Ruben Magekon as member of Central Committee;

The Committee also agreed:

- to appoint **Rev. Robina Winbush** as member of the Special Commission in place of Rev. Eugene Turner;
- to appoint **Ms. Wendy McFadden** as member of the Communication

Advisory Group in place of Mr. Randy Naylor.

The General Secretary informed the Committee of the delicate situation regarding Rev. Levi Akhura and of the Officers' decision to write to his church with the request to ask him to resign his membership of the Central Committee.

Applications for membership

Recommendation

After some reflection and exchange of views, the Nominations Committee ***recommended*** *and the Executive Committee* ***agreed*** *to postpone the reception of new member churches until the meeting of the Central Committee in 2003.*

The Committee also ***recommended*** *that the applying churches be informed of the reasons for the postponement, in particular the current study on membership issues which may imply a change of membership categories, and that the work on completing the applications which are in process may continue.*

Dates and Arrangements for Meetings of Executive and Central Committees

The letter of invitation for the meeting of the Executive Committee in Denmark was received with appreciation. It was noted that members are encouraged to arrive in Copenhagen on Saturday, 16 February, and stay in Copenhagen until Monday, 18 February. The meeting itself will take place in Nyborg, 19-22 February 2002.

The Executive Committee in February 2003 will take place in Kerala, India. Members are invited to arrive in Cochin on 15 February to participate in the Maramon Convention of the Mar Thoma Church on 16

February. The meeting will close on 20 February.

The dates of the meetings of the Central Committee for 2002 - 2005 were agreed (see below).

Towards the Ninth Assembly

Looking forward to the Ninth Assembly, the Committee recommended the initiation of a process of exploring suitable venues for the assembly, with a view to deciding about the venue and dates of the Ninth Assembly at the Central Committee meeting in September 2002.

Dates and Places of Next Meetings

2003

Executive Committee	17-20 February in Kerala, India
Executive Committee	22-23 August, Geneva
Central Committee	25 August-2 September, Geneva

2004

Executive Committee	17-20 February
Executive Committee	24-27 August

2005

Executive Committee	18-19 February
Central Committee	21 February-1 March
Executive Committee	13-16 September

16. EVALUATION OF THE COMMITTEE MEETING

Dr Best invited the members of the Committee to make a brief oral evaluation of the meeting: Members said that the time given to each person for sharing at the beginning of the meeting had been much appreciated and

had given them the opportunity to learn more about the situation of the churches in their individual contexts. It should be retained for future meetings. Executive Committee members should come prepared with brief comments on behalf of their churches and regions. She asked the Executive Committee members to share in writing to the General Secretary their evaluation of the meeting in order to help the officers to plan for the next Executive Committee in February 2002.

17. CLOSING REMARKS

The Executive Committee wished the General Secretary well in his study leave during October and November, his intention being to pull together in a study on the culture of life different ideas on globalization, overcoming violence and the theology of life.

The Executive Committee assured the team going to the USA of their prayers and wished them well.

The Committee expressed its thanks and appreciation to Ms Jeanne Becher, Assistant to the General Secretary, for all her good work done on behalf of the Executive and Central Committees in past years and wished her well in her retirement.

Dr Best thanked the members of the Executive Committee for their participation in the meeting, and expressed her appreciation to the General Secretary and the staff in the preparation and conduct of this meeting.

Dr Best closed the meeting at 12.30 p.m. on Friday, 14 September 2001.

Dr. Konrad Raiser led the closing prayer.

Appendix I

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Officers:	H.H. Aram I, Catholicos of Cilicia	Moderator
	Mrs Justice Sophia Adinyira	Vice-Moderator
	Dr Marion Best	Vice-Moderator
	Rev. Dr Konrad Raiser	General Secretary
Members:	Rev. Yadessa Daba	
	Rev. Inamar Correa De Souza	
	Dean Anders Gadegaard	
	H.G. Mar Cyril Aphrem Karim	
	Rev. Dr Clifton Kirkpatrick	
	Ms Jana Krajciriková	
	Rev. Septemmy E. Lakawa	
	Prof. Dr Samuel Lee	
	Rev. Dr Maake S.J. Masango	
	H.G. Archbishop Nifon of Targoviste	
	Rt.Rev. Dr Zacharias Mar Theophilus	
	Very Rev. Dr Georges Tsetsis	
	Rev. Dr Ilaitia Sevati Tuwere	
	Bishop McKinley Young	
Ex Officio:	Fr Dr K. M. George	
Apologies:	Rev. Dr Hilarion Alfeyev	
	Ms Donnalie E.C. Edwards-Cabey	
	Bishop Dr Wolfgang Huber	
	Ms Carmencita Karagdag	
	Very Rev. Leonid Kishkovsky	
	Ms Abigail O. Ogunsanya	

Substitutes:	Ms Anne Glynn Mackoul
	Rev. Mikhail Gundyaev
	Bishop Dr Rolf Koppe
Staff:	Ms Jeanne Becher
	Mr Robert Christeler
	Ms Kristine Greenaway
	Ms Geneviève Jacques
	Rev. Dr Sam Kobia
	Mr Georges Lemopoulos
Part-Time	Ms Elaine Dykes
	Rev. Dwain Epps
	Ms Angelica Espinoza
	Mr Michiel Hardon
	Mr Hubert van Beek
Minute-Writers:	Ms Jeanne Becher
	Ms Catherine Christ-Taha
	Ms Simone Ergas
Administration:	Mr Gerard Scarff
	Ms Ursula Zierl

Appendix II

MEMBERSHIP OF SUB-COMMITTEES

Programme Sub-Committee

Dr Marion Best	Moderator
Rev. Inamar Correa De Souza	
Ms Jana Krajciriková	
H.G. Mar Cyril Aphrem Karim	
Rev. Septemmy E. Lakawa	
Rev. Dr Maake S.J. Masango	
Rt.Rev. Dr Zacharias Mar Theophilus	

Staffing and Nominations Sub-Committee

Mrs Justice Sophia Adinyira	Moderator
Rev Dr. Hilarion Alfeyev	(absent)
Rev. Yadessa Daba	
Ms Donnalie E.C. Edwards-Cabey	(absent)
Dean Anders Gadegaard	
Rev. Dr Clifton Kirkpatrick	
Ms Carmencita Karagdag	(absent)

Finance Sub-Committee

Bishop Dr Wolfgang Huber	Moderator (absent)
Very Rev. Leonid Kishkovsky	(absent)
Prof. Dr Samuel Lee	
Archbishop Nifon of Targoviste	
Ms Abigail O. Ogunsanya	(absent)
Rev. Dr Ilaitia Sevati Tuwere	
Bishop McKinley Young	

Ad-Hoc Public Issues Committee

Rev. Septemmy E. Lakawa
Rev. Dr S.J. Masango
Archbishop Nifon of Targoviste
Very Rev. Dr Georges Tsetsis